

## TB Fast Facts

Right now one-third of all people in the world have TB infection.

Every year 8 million people in the world develop TB disease.

BCG does not provide lifelong protection against TB.

There is medication to prevent TB infection from becoming TB disease.

There is medication to cure TB disease.

Many countries have used BCG vaccine for over 80 years.

Most of these countries still have a lot of TB disease.



**Dark areas use BCG and have a lot of TB disease**

**For more information about BCG or TB, write or call the**

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Division of Tuberculosis Prevention and Control

305 South Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Phone: (617) 983-6970

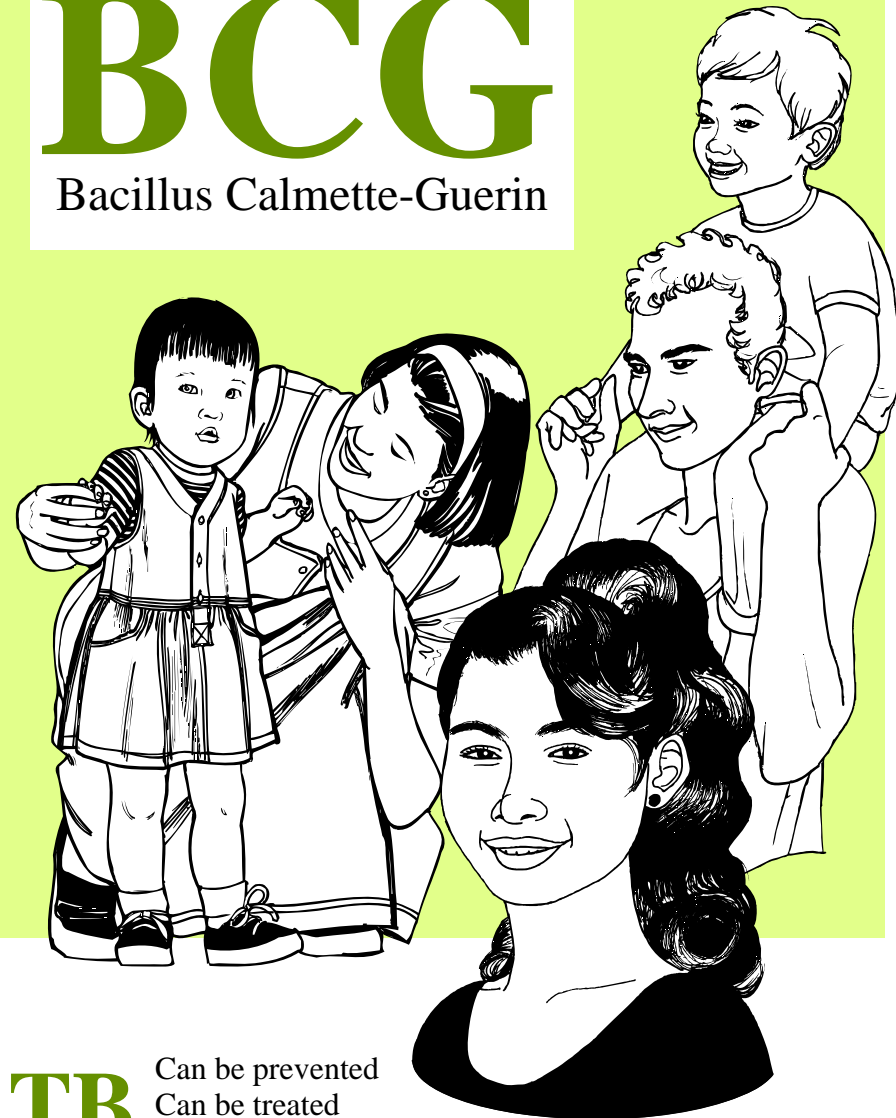
Web page: [www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/tb/](http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/tb/)

Audience: General

BCG 2003

# BCG

Bacillus Calmette-Guerin



## TB

Can be prevented

Can be treated

Can be cured

## What is BCG?

BCG (bacillus Calmette-Guerin) is a vaccine that helps protect against tuberculosis (TB). It is given to infants and young children in some countries where **TB infection** and **TB disease** is common.

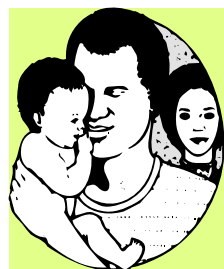


## How is TB infection different from TB disease?

**TB infection:** A person with TB infection has a *small number* of TB germs in his or her body, but the germs are in a sleeping stage and are not causing any harm. A person with TB infection *cannot* give TB germs to anyone.

**TB Disease:** A person with TB disease has *a lot* of TB germs in his or her body and the germs are causing harm. A person with TB disease *can* pass TB germs on to others.

## What does BCG do?

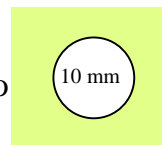


BCG can help prevent infants and young children who develop TB infection from getting sick with TB disease. TB disease in children can be *very* serious and is sometimes fatal. BCG can provide some protection against this serious form of TB disease.

## Does BCG cause a positive TB test result?

If you are TB tested within five years of getting BCG, you may have a very small reaction at the site of the TB test (usually a bump less than 10 mm in size). But your positive TB test most likely means you have TB infection if:

- Your reaction is larger than 10 mm
- You were vaccinated more than 5 years ago
- You were born or spent a lot of time in a country where TB is common
- You know or have spent time with someone who had TB disease



**A positive TB test *does not* mean that BCG is working!**

## Does BCG protect against TB for life?

No. Studies have shown that BCG can protect against TB in young children. BCG offers little or no protection against TB to older children or adults. **People who have had BCG can still get TB infection, and they can still get TB disease.**

There is medicine to prevent TB infection from becoming TB disease. Ask if the medicine is right for you.



**Don't get sick with TB disease. Don't give TB germs to your friends and family.**